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ABSTRACT

The language planning activities undertaken by Belgium's government suggest that the goals of linguistic legislation have changed over time, reflecting the evolution and complex interplay of social, cultural, political, and economic characteristics. Initially, language legislation stemmed from the desire of Flemish militants to protect and promote their language in the northern provinces; but they neither questioned nor jeopardized francophone language rights. Once the right to use Netherlandic in Flanders had been granted, the government was pressured into instituting territorial monolingualism in Flanders and Wallonia while trying to protect the bilingual status of Brussels. This legislation eventually led to eradication of francophone privileges in the northern provinces. During the third wave of language planning activities, language legislation became embodied in the nation's constitution. Due to growing strength of the Flemish and Walloon movements, the state was restructured and French and Netherlandic ethnolinguistic communities were granted some power over language planning activities. In current language planning, there is neither complete delegation of powers nor total centralization of legislative powers. Belgium is now constitutionally divided into four linguistic territories, three linguistic and cultural communities, and three economic regions. (MSE)

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The "other language": Language planning in Belgium[1]

Michele Valasek

This paper focuses primarily upon the status planning activities and ensuing legislation that has influenced the use of Netherlandic and French in the northern provinces of Belgium.[2] Following a brief overview of the major historical trends in language use within this geographical area, this paper traces several of the major social and economic factors that crystallized eventually into political issues.

Belgium Today

The territory now known as Belgium covers 11,781 square miles and hosts ten million inhabitants. As an independent state, Belgium has existed only for a little over 150 years. Despite its brief history, the country has experienced intense controversies concerning language use and choice, both at the individual and regional level. The central government, albeit unwillingly, has been thrust into the role of an active language planning agency. The work of the government in this respect has resulted in what has been characterized as "the heaviest linguistic legislation in the world" (Baeten Beadsmore, 1980: 147). This steady diet of legislation, much of which is now embodied in the country's Constitution, has ultimately reshaped the unitary and centralized nation-state created in 1830 into a highly decentralized and semi-federal structure.

Belgium presently is divided into four linguistic regions as legislated by the language laws of 1932 and 1963 and later upheld by the constitutional amendments of 1971 and 1980. These four regions are: a monolingual Netherlandic linguistic region, a monolingual French linguistic region, a monolingual German linguistic region, and the bilingual Netherlandic-French region of Brussels.

The major linguistic border runs in an east-west direction and divides the country in half. The northern part consists of four provinces which are referred to as "Flanders." In addition, the linguistic border runs through the province of Brabant of which only the northern part is Netherlandic-speaking. In these northern provinces, Netherlandic is the official language of public administration, education, and business. The southern part of the country, referred to as "Wallonia," includes four provinces as well as the southern tip of the province of Brabant. French

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is the official language of these provinces. Although not physically visible, the linguistic border nevertheless constitutes a line of demarcation separating the country's two major ethnolinguistic groups, namely the Netherlandic-speakers in the north and the French-speakers in the south. In the eastern section of the French province of Liege, bordering the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and West Germany, small German-speaking areas are protected by language laws. Finally, Brussels, the country's capital, situated in the Netherlandic part of the province of Brabant, is officially recognized as bilingual in French and Netherlandic. Despite its bilingual status, the capital is predominantly Francophone. It is presently estimated that approximately 56% of the country's population resides in Flanders, 32% in Wallonia and 11% in Brussels. The percentage of German-speakers is estimated to be 1% of the total population (Wardaugh, 1987: 204).

The preceding description however is an oversimplification of the nation's linguistic situation. For example, one finds areas in which a language other than the official one receives "protection." Thus, language laws ensure specific linguistic rights to both French-language minority areas in Flanders as well as to Netherlandic-language minority areas in Wallonia. Similarly, specific linguistic rights are extended to certain German-language minorities within the French-language region. In addition to the three languages mentioned above, a wide variety of French, Netherlandic, and German dialects are commonly used within each province. Thus, Belgium's linguistic diversity encompasses not only several official languages but also a panoply of dialects.

Belgium before the Fourteenth Century

Belgium's north-west linguistic cleavage far predates the creation of Belgium as an independent state. As early as the third century, groups of Salien Franks settled in Flanders which was then part of the Roman Empire. The Franks encountered little resistance in these sparsely inhabited areas and were therefore able to maintain their Germanic language without interference. The southern regions of Wallonia, also under Roman rule, were more densely populated than their northern counterparts and consequently assimilated the Franks that infiltrated their confines. This assimilation led to the loss of the Germanic language and to the adoption of the Romance speech of that region (Mallinson, 1970). Thus, already by the fifth century, at which time the Romans were retreating from their former territories, the Germanic vernaculars were commonly used in the north while Romance languages ruled the south. It is thought that by the eleventh century, the east-west linguistic border mirrored that of today (Huggett, 1969).

From the fifth to the fourteenth century, this territory, with the exception of the area encompassing the episcopal principality of Liege, experienced numerous battles between rival European powers. The territory was at the mercy of the ever-changing alliances and treaties that successively subdivided, parcelled out and reunited this geographical area. The inhabitants of

these regions neither identified with nor attempted to establish a unified territory encompassing both Flanders and Wallonia. Their feelings of national identity as well as their desire for self-rule were demonstrated only at the level of the Principalities (Rousseau, 1977). Despite the fact that the area changed hands frequently, the presence of Netherlandic speakers in the north and of French speakers in the south remained a constant feature of the area.

Beginning in the Middle Ages, French language and culture grew in prestige. By the thirteenth century, French had become the literary language of Wallonia and the lingua franca of the commercial fairs. At the same time, Flanders, which boasted considerable economic prosperity and urban development, was also the cradle of a prestigious Netherlandic culture enjoying international renown (Lyon, 1971).

Belgium: Fourteenth Century to Nineteenth Century

From the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, Belgium fell successively under the rule of the House of Burgundy (1384-1555), the Spanish Habsburgs (1555-1714), the Austrian Habsburgs (1714-1794), the French (1794-1814), and the Dutch (1815-1830). Despite this succession of ruling powers, the east-west linguistic border remained unchanged. However, in addition to this geographical frontier, there emerged a new linguistic cleavage reflective of social status. More specifically, the higher echelons of Flemish society gradually adopted French while shifting away from the use of Netherlandic. By the 1800s, a "social language barrier" (Haegendoren, 1970: 17) separated the Flemish educated elite from the rest of the Flemish population.

During the reign of the Dukes of Burgundy (1384-1555), who were vassals of the King of France, French began to find favor among the territory's nobility and high clergy. Although not of widespread use in Flanders, French was nonetheless becoming symbolic of the wealthy and powerful of the northern provinces (Mallinson, 1970). The reins of power subsequently fell into the hands of the Spanish Habsburgs. Although Philip II of Spain (1555-1598) attempted to impose Spanish as the language of the royal courts (Ruys, 1981), French was by that time firmly entrenched among the nobility (Ruys, 1981).

The predominance of French as the language of culture and power became further pronounced during the Austrian era (1714-1794). Although Austrian rule was not accompanied by a language policy (Polasky, in Lijphart, 1981), Gallicization of the upper classes gained impetus as French became the language of "high society" across Europe (Vroede, 1975: 16). Not only was it the language of the nobility and high clergy but it was also embraced by members of the upper-middle class seeking to climb the social ladder. Their motivation was spurred by the fact that French was favored as the administrative language between the Austrian authorities and their

conquered territories (Vroede, 1975). It was therefore a necessary tool for those aspiring to positions within the government (Polasky, in Lijphart, 1981).

As the Austrian era approached its end, the first stirrings of concern about the Frenchification of the Flemish provinces began to surface among members of the Netherlandic-speaking intelligentsia. In 1788, Verlooy published a treatise entitled "Memoirs of the neglect of the mother tongue in the Low Countries." In it, Verlooy urged the inhabitants of Flanders not only to preserve and develop their own language but also to resist the spread of French (Vroede, 1975). Notwithstanding the importance and subsequent impact of such writings, the territory's elite had little reason to abandon its ticket to higher status. Consequently, Frenchification of the upper strata of Flemish society continued unimpeded for well over a century.

In 1794, following an unsuccessful attempt to create and maintain an independent state, the Austrian Netherlands (i.e., present-day Belgium) as well as the heretofore autonomous Principality of Liege were invaded and occupied by French troops. France annexed its new territories and divided them into nine "*departments*." French was declared the national language and a policy of linguistic assimilation was immediately put into effect. Thus began a new chapter in the Frenchification, or "*verfransing*," of Flanders. The government's goal to create a unified and linguistically homogeneous territory rapidly led to the systematic replacement of Netherlandic by French in the territory's judicial, administrative and educational domains. As regards the nation's educational system, after twenty years of French rule, the secondary schools were yielding totally Frenchified students and consequently French had, as a matter of course, infiltrated the heart of the Flemish middle-class (Vroede 1975). The Gallicization of Flanders' upper-classes was only slightly impeded in 1815 when Holland took over the reins of power.

This shift in power (1814-1830) was accompanied by a shift in language policy. King William I of Holland, seeking to unify his southern and northern territories, attempted to impose Dutch upon his newly acquired provinces. To this end, in 1819, the King stipulated that Dutch be gradually introduced as the official language of both administration and law (Kossman, 1978). William I also instituted a much needed elementary school system throughout the country. These schools used only Netherlandic in Flanders while their Walloon counterparts were expected to eventually shift to the use of Netherlandic. However, the majority of these language laws went unheeded due to the strong and continued resistance of both the Walloon and the Flemish bourgeoisie (Vroede, 1975).

It should be noted that despite the proximity of Flanders to the Dutch United Provinces, Flanders had had little contact with its northern neighbors since the Dutch had been recognized as independent from Spanish rule in 1648. The creation of the Dutch United Provinces had been accompanied by a widespread emigration of the Netherlandic-speaking intelligentsia from Flanders, still under Spanish rule, to Holland. Subsequently, a wide array of dialects developed in

Flanders due to the lack of contact with the more standardized northern variety, the very poor educational system, and the Frenchification of the educated elite. Thus, many of the Flemish inhabitants spoke varieties of Netherlandic substantially different from that spoken in the north (De Schryver, in Lijphart, 1981). Furthermore, the Flemish viewed their northern neighbors as Protestant enemies propagating their religious beliefs and attempting to control the educational system of a highly Catholic region. In sum, Flanders neither welcomed Dutch rule nor its policy of Dutchification. The general population's animosity towards the Dutch was a valuable asset to the territory's Francophone bourgeoisie during its fight for independence in 1830.

Belgium emerged from the revolution of 1830 with all of the components necessary for the linguistic disputes that have plagued the nation to date. Beginning in the eighteenth century, Frenchification of the middle and upper-middle classes had gained momentum in Flanders. A diglossic situation in which Netherlandic was spoken in the home while French was used in education and business was increasingly more common among this segment of Flemish society (Ruys, 1981). At the same time, a minority of Flanders' intelligentsia was voicing its fears concerning the maintenance of the Netherlandic language. In sum, the newly recognized state of Belgium comprised a French-speaking bourgeoisie, a variety of Netherlandic dialects spoken in the north, a variety of German dialects spoken in the east and a variety of French dialects spoken in the south.

Birth of a Nation

In 1830, Belgium was proclaimed a constitutional monarchy. The unitary nation-state was designed with a strong central government located in Brussels, the nation's capital. The Constitution of 1831 introduced, if only in principle, the freedom to use the language of one's choice. More specifically, Article 23 stated that "The use of language shall be optional. The latter may be regulated only by law and only for acts of public authority and judicial proceedings" (Polasky, in Lijphart, 1981: 34). Thus, the Constitution, which had to wait until 1967 to be officially translated from French into Netherlandic, protected the individual's right to choose the language he spoke in non-official domains.

However, in the domains of public administration and judicial affairs, Article 23 empowered the country's ruling class to impose French. Willekens (quoted in Polasky, in Lijphart, 1981: 43) points out that "...the word optional or by free choice, in no sense meant equal administration for the two languages; it meant freedom for the officials to use the language of their choice at their pleasure, with no regard for the everyday language of the citizens." Thus, the supremacy of French was sanctioned not only by custom but also by the lack of precision in the nation's fundamental law. Furthermore, a law of 1831 recognized only the French version of

official documents as having legal validity. Therefore official recognition did not extend to the translations provided for the Netherlandic and German-speaking provinces (Vroede, 1975).

The adoption of French as the language of government, the courts and higher education can be explained by a variety of factors. One should bear in mind first that the independent state had been created and fashioned by its Francophone bourgeoisie which had been accustomed to using French since Austrian rule. This bourgeoisie consequently implemented the use of French in the official domains under its control. Second, those in power estimated that, in a country hosting a wide variety of Netherlandic dialects, the use of one standardized language would be administratively more efficient (Mabille, 1986). Furthermore, the Francophones were also reacting against previous Dutch rule and its accompanying attempts at Dutchification (Gutmans, 1969). Hence, the choice of French was also a means of asserting the nation's independence from Holland.

Finally, the voting system instituted at the birth of the nation awarded control of the political arena to the nation's privileged minority. Only those with higher education, or those fulfilling a specific property qualification were given the right to vote. This franchise system placed the reins of power in the hands of only 0.1% (46,099 voters) of the country's population (Fitzmaurice, 1983). Those holding the right to vote, whether from Flanders or from Wallonia, constituted a linguistically homogeneous group of Francophones. Thus, from its inception, the Belgian state conferred advantages upon a numerical minority (1.8 million) speaking a dominant language. The majority of the population (2.4 million), being Netherlandic speakers, held neither political nor economic power.

The Flemish Movement and the Language Laws

The Romantic Movement that swept over Europe during the nineteenth century fired the enthusiasm of a handful of Flanders' Netherlandic-speaking intelligentsia. These writers and teachers were the founding fathers of what the French-speaking press baptized the "Flemish Movement." It began as a linguistic and cultural movement that was devoid initially of economic demands (Vroede, 1975). The Movement endeavored only to redress what it considered to be an unjust situation in which Netherlandic was denigrated. However, as discontent grew among the Flemish population, the status of Netherlandic rapidly became symbolic of Flanders' social and economic oppression by the nation's Francophones.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the character of the Movement was rapidly changing. Initially, the Flemish Movement drew its support from the Netherlandic-speaking intelligentsia as well as from the ranks of the lower middle-class (Vroede, 1975). In contrast, by the end of the nineteenth century, it boasted members, called Flamingants, representing a wide spectrum of Flemish society (Vroede, 1975). This growing support can be explained by a variety of factors.

In part it was encouraged and reinforced by the actions of the Catholic party which was invariably a member of the various government coalitions of the time. This party received most of its support from the northern provinces and consequently was receptive to the passing of legislation that would appease its Flemish electorate. This electorate, since the Constitutional amendment of 1893 which granted at least one vote to all males over the age of 24, had not only increased significantly in number but had also become aware of the political power it wielded.

Consequently, the Flamingants, now in a position to elect Parliamentary representatives sympathetic to their cause, possessed political bargaining power which had to be reckoned with. In addition, since the royal decree of 1864 stipulating that the standardized version of Dutch Netherlandic was to be adopted as the linguistic norm in Flanders, the Flemings now possessed one linguistic variety upon which they could focus their hopes and demands. Finally, the Flemish Movement had successfully harnessed the escalating dissatisfaction in the northern provinces concerning the economic discrepancies existing between Flanders and Wallonia. More specifically, with regard to the state's economic development, it should be noted that in the beginning of the nineteenth century the southern provinces had rapidly developed into a bastion of the industrial revolution. Wallonia boasted thriving industries associated with, among others, coal mining and steel manufacturing.

On the other hand, with the exception of the prosperous port of Antwerp, the northern provinces relied primarily upon an agrarian economy and small family-based textile industries. During the mid-1800s, this textile industry faced increased foreign competition and encountered severe difficulties selling its products on the international market. In addition, the agricultural community suffered from poor harvests, the potato blight of the 1840s and foreign competition. As a result, growing numbers of the Flemish population were both unemployed and poverty-stricken. These unemployed had little choice but to move or commute to the more industrialized Francophone provinces of the south (Haegendoren, 1979). For those who moved to the southern provinces, linguistic and cultural assimilation was par for the course. Hence, the Flamingants, realizing that one means of arresting the Frenchification of the Flemish population was to provide employment within the northern provinces, were making more and more economic demands of the government by the turn of the century.

From a political viewpoint, the Movement was weakened by ideological dissension among its members. Although supporters of the Flemish cause, the Flamingants were divided between the two major political parties of the time, namely the Liberal Party and the Catholic Party (Ruys, 1981). Thus, in order to obtain the desired reforms, the Flamingants exerted pressure upon the parties that they respectively supported. Despite these ideological differences, the Movement's supporters organized committees and associations which outlined their major grievances in the form of petitions submitted to Parliament.

The Flamingants' demands rapidly extended to the right to use Netherlandic in the administrative, judicial and educational domains in Flanders. As the Movement became increasingly more politically active and organized, it began to wage campaigns aiming to embody their linguistic demands in the nation's legislation. Each language law was a hard-won victory and generally represented a compromise between the government's desire to maintain the status quo and the activists' stubborn refusal to accept French as a sine qua non for full membership in the nation's political and economic life.

With regard to the language legislation promulgated before the turn of the century, it should be noted that, due to the low prestige of Netherlandic and the prevalent belief among the state's ruling classes that Flemish was of limited inter-national value, bilingualism at a national level was never considered. Rather, the language legislation aimed only to permit the use of Flemish in administrative and educational domains in Flanders and Brussels. While Wallonia would remain monolingual, Flanders and Brussels would be bilingual.

Belgium: Early Twentieth Century

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Flamingants had successfully obtained the right for Netherlandic to be used in the Flemish administration, lower courts, as well as in Parliament (see Appendix 1). Furthermore, in what was to become known as the "Equality Law" of 1898, Netherlandic translations of laws and Royal decrees were granted the same legal validity as the French versions. In this manner, Netherlandic gained recognition as the nation's official language next to French. It should be noted that these laws did not stem from a fundamental change in the attitudes of the nation's Francophones towards the Netherlandic Tongue and its speakers (Vroede, 1975). They were initially conciliatory measures granted to appease what was considered to be a small minority of trouble-makers. These trouble-makers were viewed as bullying the masses into believing that the maintenance of their "patois" was a sign of ethnic solidarity (Wilmotte, 1912: 109). This attitude was exemplified by the fact that Walloon opposition to the Equality Law delayed the voting of the law by the Senate for two full years.

With regard to education, the fight to institutionalize Netherlandic as the sole medium of instruction in the secondary school system of the northern provinces was to span a century (see Appendix 2). In 1850, the government conceded to the teaching of Netherlandic as the second language in the state secondary schools of Flanders. The legislation of 1883 made Netherlandic the sole language of instruction during the first two years of secondary schooling. However, this law also specified exceptions in which instruction in French had to be provided.

The First World War was a turning point for the Flemish Movement. Prior to the war, the majority of the Flamingants were also supporters of the unitary state. However, during the war, an increasing number of the Movement's supporters began to advocate a more autonomous

Flanders. This change in political stance found support among the Flemish troops, under the command of French-speaking officers, who were defending the Ijzer front. The Front Movement, or Frontism, advocated the creation of a federal state in which Flanders would govern itself and in which Netherlandic would be the only official language (Mabille, 1986). Nonetheless, the Front Movement remained patriotic and in no way collaborated with the occupying German forces. In contrast, there were small groups of Flemish radicals, called Activists, who advocated Flemish nationalism and viewed collaboration with the German occupying forces as a justifiable means of obtaining an autonomous Flemish state. Due to such collaboration, at the end of the war, the rank and file of the Flemish Movement came under harsh attack from the nation's French-speakers. Consequently, the Flamingants had to wait until public hostility receded before their demands would be once again considered.

Between the wars the Flemish movement gained in strength. It not only benefited from the support of an increasing number of educated Netherlandic speakers, but it also boasted a stronger representation among the political figures of the time. This political backing had been reinforced through the constitutional amendment of 1921 which granted only one vote per male over the age of 24. Consequently, the nation's Francophone elite could no longer reap the political benefits of the plural voting system instituted in 1893. The full strength of the northern provinces demographically growing population would henceforth have to be catered to by the Catholic, Liberal and Socialist parties.

In 1926, the Education Act created Netherlandic-speaking sections at all levels of the Flemish state secondary schools. However, French-speaking schools continued to exist in the northern provinces, and French remained the medium of instruction for certain subjects throughout the nation's educational system. This act also specified that schools in Brussels should shift to the exclusive use of French during the third year of secondary schooling. Hence, both in Flanders and Brussels, Gallicization of the Flemish upper classes was not seriously jeopardized.

With regards to higher education, the Flamingants had been requesting a monolingual Netherlandic-speaking university since the turn of the century. The Flemish militants had focused their hopes upon the hitherto French monolingual university of Ghent. They realized that as long as higher education remained in the hands of French-speakers, Frenchification of Flanders would continue unimpeded. Furthermore, the interdependency of higher education, political power and economic prosperity had been drawn to their attention through Lodewijk de Raet's "An Economic Programme for the Flemish Movement" published in 1906 (Ruys, 1981). Thus inspired by the belief that higher education in Netherlandic would open the doors to economic and political power for the nation's Flemish community, the Flamingants exerted political and social pressure in order to obtain a Netherlandic-only university. Despite the prevalent belief shared by the Francophone population that Netherlandic was "unfit to serve as a vehicular language in higher education"

(Ruys, 1981: 62), the Flemish militants had only to look to their Dutch neighbors for proof that their language could indeed be successfully used in the transmission of cultural and scientific information (De Smet, 1974).

The Flamingants' demands were under consideration just before the outbreak of World War I. However, the Germans, in an attempt to draw the inhabitants of Flanders to their sides, opened Ghent University as a monolingual Netherlandic institute from 1916 to 1918. This university, known by the general population as "von Bissing University," became a symbol of Germany's "*Flamenpolitik*" and hence of German occupation and war-time collaboration. As a result, the nation's Francophone population resisted the reopening of the university as a monolingual Netherlandic institute. This Francophone resistance may also be explained by the bourgeoisie's fear that such a university would create a Netherlandic-speaking elite which would jeopardize the Francophones' privileged position within the country (Kossman, 1978).

Nonetheless, in 1923, following widespread and continued pressure by much of the Flemish population, Ghent University opened a Netherlandic section and thus became bilingual. The government hoped that these measures would appease the Flamingants' demands. Such was not the case. The Flemish militants feared that the university's French section, using the nation's prestigious language, would continue to attract students who would otherwise have attended its Netherlandic counterpart (Kossman, 1978). Consequently, the Flamingants continued to demand that the university shift to the exclusive use of Netherlandic. Their efforts were rewarded in 1930 when the government granted the university a new charter which make it the nation's first monolingual Netherlandic institute of higher education.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Belgium harbored a growth in Flemish nationalism which expressed itself in demands for either the establishment of a federal state or that of a completely autonomous Flemish nation. The major parties voicing such demands included the right-wing "*Vlaamsch Nationaal Verbond*" (V.N.V.) which had emerged out of a complete reorganization of the Front Party in 1933, and the "*De Vlag*." In addition, the interwar years witnessed an increase in the number of both moderate and radical Flamingants requesting the exclusive use of Netherlandic in the administrative domains of the northern provinces (Kossman, 1978). In order to quiet the demands of these Flamingants, as well as to attempt to ward off the threat of federalism or separatism, the government passed the language laws of 1932. These laws stood in sharp contrast to the legislation that had been passed to date.

More specifically, they introduced the concept that "language could be a function of geography" (Sherman Swing, 1980: 73). This concept was expressed through the creation of territorial monolingualism in the administrative domains of both Flanders and Wallonia. These laws recognized Brussels as bilingual and specified that the administration of the nation's capital should reflect its bilingual status. In addition, the existence of the linguistic border was legally

recognized and it was specified that the exact location of the latter could be modified depending on the results of each decennial census.

These Language Laws also introduced the principle of monolingualism within the nation's school system. Thus, students would attend monolingual French-speaking schools in Wallonia and separate monolingual Netherlandic-speaking classes in Flanders. In Brussels, the law maintained the principle introduced by the Education Law of 1914, namely that elementary school students would be taught in their Mother Tongue. Hence, children residing within Brussels would attend either French-only or Netherlandic-only classes depending on the language commonly used in the home. However, it should be noted that these laws did not eradicate all of the French-speaking sections of Flemish secondary schools and that they did not apply to private schools (Ruys, 1981).

Furthermore, the legislation permitted the use of "transmutation classes" in which French-speaking students in Flanders and Netherlandic-speaking students in Wallonia were initially taught in their home language while gradually being introduced to the language of the province. In fact, these classes were frequently used by Francophone parents residing in Flanders as a means of eluding the language laws and, by so doing, providing a French-speaking education for their children (Sherman Swing, 1980).

Despite the limitations of the language laws pertaining to education, one should bear in mind that the development of a monolingual Netherlandic school system played a crucial role in providing Flanders with an educated elite which no longer accepted the unquestioned supremacy of French within the nation's borders. Netherlandic had evolved from being the language of the poor and rural to being that of law, medicine, business as well as politics. Consequently, the Francophone elite was increasingly forced to admit Netherlandic speakers into its midst. In addition, the schools were gradually propagating the use of a single standardized variety throughout the northern provinces (Gutmans, 1969).

Territorial monolingualism was further reaffirmed by the legislation of 1935 which stated that all of the courts of law in Flanders would henceforth have to use Netherlandic. This law also stipulated that proceedings using French would be declared void. In this manner, the government clearly specified control mechanisms and instituted penalties for infringements of the legislation.

From 1940 to 1944, Belgium was once again occupied by German troops. This German occupation was accompanied by substantial collaboration from the extremist factions of the Flemish Movement that had been advocating separatism in the years preceding the war. Consequently, the Flemish Movement once again fell into disrepute following the liberation. Many French-speaking newspapers went as far as advocating that the language laws be revoked (Ruys, 1981). The Movement had to wait patiently until the 1950s before such anti-Flemish feelings subsided (Witte, in Witte et al, 1984).

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, "Community Parties" (Fitzmaurice, 1983: 171) advocating federalism found increasing support among the inhabitants of Flanders as well as Wallonia. Belgium, as a unitary state, was thus being questioned by members of both its northern and its southern provinces. Since the late 1950s, the "*Volksunie*," which was a more moderate party than the V.N.V. that had fallen into disrepute following the war, attracted the substantial popular backing from the Flemish community. This party became a strong and active member of the mainline political system during the 1960s (Augustinus Ter Hoeven, 1978). The major Francophone parties included the "*Front Democratique des Francophones*," representing the interests of the French-speakers in Brussels, and the "*Rassemblement Wallon*" which drew its support from Wallonia. The latter catered to the fears of the Walloons regarding the shift in the balance of power entailed by Wallonia's decreasing birth rate as compared to Flanders' hearty demographic increase. The major focus of the *Rassemblement Wallon* was not upon the protection and promotion of the French-speakers' culture and language. Rather, it stressed the economic development and well-being of Wallonia's Francophones. This party echoed the French-speakers' growing concern over Wallonia's economic problems, which stood in sharp contrast to Flanders' increasing economic strength. As such, the *Rassemblement Wallon* has been noted to initially embody "economic nationalism" whereas the Flemish movement was initially characteristic of "cultural nationalism" (Mughan, 1978). However, it should be noted that both the Netherlandic and the French nationalist parties advocated and defended economic, cultural and social issues. Mughan (1978: 37) points out that the development and support of these parties show "that the politicization of the language cleavage in Belgium is not a transient phenomenon." To the contrary, these parties reflect "the permanent expansion of the established party system to include parties of ethnic defense" (Mughan, 1978: 37).

With regard to the nation's post-war economic development, Flanders as well as Wallonia witnessed a reversal in their prior economic statuses. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Wallonia had begun to show signs of economic stress. By the 1950s, the southern provinces were increasingly suffering from the decline of their outmoded heavy industries, as well as the depletion and closing of their collieries. Conversely, since the turn of the century, Flanders had not only discovered important coal supplies but had also begun to benefit from increased industrialization. Although the two World Wars as well as the depression of the 1930s had temporarily restrained Flanders' economic growth, by the second half of the century the northern provinces were enjoying considerable economic prosperity.

Flanders' newly-found economic strength added fuel to the fires of the Flamingants' grievances. Their demands increasingly focused on the language border, namely that it be permanently delineated without options of changes after decennial censuses, and that the limits of bilingual Brussels be permanently fixed to its existing 19 boroughs.

The language law of 1963 addressed both of these issues. This legislation differed from that of 1932 in that it "carried with it the explicit vision of a future in which semi-autonomous sub-nations would coexist in a federation" (Sherman Swing, 1980: 88). These laws defined three monolingual territories (Wallonia, Flanders and the German-speaking areas) and maintained the bilingual status of Brussels. The linguistic border was permanently drawn and, as a consequence, could no longer be altered following census findings. The bilingual agglomeration of Brussels was limited to its existing 19 boroughs. The legislation went as far as to specify that the language of the region had to be used for all official business documents as well as business interactions. With regard to education, these laws maintained monolingual education in each linguistic region and marked the end of the "transmutation classes." This legislation applied to both state and private educational facilities. Furthermore, in Brussels, education in the child's mother tongue was upheld and language inspectors could verify that each child attended an educational facility of the appropriate language. Parents living in Brussels had to wait until 1970 before the principle of the "*Liberte du pere de famille*" was restored, thus permitting them to once again choose the language of their children's education. These 1963 Language Laws, later upheld by the constitutional amendments of 1971 and 1980, not only reaffirmed territorial monolingualism but also stipulated penalties for infringements of the legislation.

As stated above, the nation's capital was confined to its existing 19 boroughs. However, much to the anger of the Flemish community, the laws of 1963 assigned a special administrative status to six additional boroughs situated on the periphery of the capital. These Netherlandic boroughs, known as the "*communes á facilite*," would henceforth have to provide French-speaking administration and education for their French-speaking residents. These *communes á facilite* have been, and continue to be, the center of linguistic disputes. In order to fully understand the controversy enshrouding these boroughs, one must examine the discrepancy between Brussels' official bilingual status and its primarily Francophone population.

Brussels is situated in the Netherlandic-speaking part of the province of Brabant. Prior to French rule, it harbored a predominantly Netherlandic-speaking population. However, during the French era, Brussels became increasingly more Francophone. As success within the city was to a large extent conditional upon one's knowledge of the French language, Gallicization of the population continued throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Whereas the Netherlandic-speakers comprised 66.6% of the capital's population in 1846, they represented 46% in 1910 (Vroede, 1975) and were estimated to represent only 20% in 1979 (Lefèvre, 1979).

In addition to the Frenchification of the Brussels agglomeration, the Flamingants watched with growing dismay as the "oil stain" (Vroede, 1975: 71) spread to the boroughs surrounding the capital. As more and more Francophones moved into these suburbs, they began to demand French-speaking administration and education. The Flamingants viewed these demands as yet

another sign of "*gebiedsroofd*" (territory theft) which had to be halted at all costs (Levy, 1978). Thus, the militants fought to maintain monolingual Netherlandic administration and education within these boroughs. Despite Flemish activism, the language laws of 1963 granted the above mentioned linguistic privileges to the six suburbs in question. In 1971, their special administrative status was revoked and the boroughs became dependent upon the Netherlandic administrative region of Hal-Vilvoorde. However, the special linguistic rights granted to their French-speaking populations were maintained and remain in vigor to date (CRISP 534: 24).

Constitutional Amendments

The language laws and constitutional amendments that followed the legislation of 1963 upheld the principle of territorial monolingualism previously introduced. However, the constitutional amendments differ from prior legislation in that they embodied in the state's fundamental law the end of Belgium as a unitary nation-state. The very structure of the state was reshaped in that the central government was no longer solely responsible for all legislative and executive acts. These amendments resulted from the pressure exerted through both the traditional party system and the Flemish and Walloon community parties. The inhabitants of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels respectively fought to safeguard their political and economic interests.

The Constitutional Amendments of 1971 delineated the boundaries of the four linguistic territories of Wallonia, Flanders, the German area, and Brussels. Article "107 quarter" created the three economic regions of Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels. The councils of these regions cannot legislate upon linguistic or educational issues. Rather, they focus upon such matters as economic development, the environment, urban development, and unemployment. Of relevance to the subject at hand is Article "3 ter" which recognized three Cultural Communities: the French Cultural Community, the Netherlandic Cultural Community, and the German Cultural Community. These Communities differ from the "Regions" in that the "regions are geographical concepts, whereas the communities are linguistic and cultural entities" (Fitzmaurice, 1983: 111). The French and Netherlandic Cultural Communities were endowed with Cultural Councils which have the power to pass decrees, holding the same weight as laws passed by the national government, in the following areas: national and international defense; the use and illustration of the language of that community; some aspects of language use in schools; language use in public administration with the exception of the judiciary and military domains; language use in the social relations between employers and their personnel as well as in all official business transactions. In sum, the Cultural Communities were granted the right to share with the national government the power to legislate on language matters. With regard to such Community legislation, it is not surprising that the Council of the Flemish Cultural Community has tended to pass more decrees concerning language use than the Council of the French Cultural Community.

The Constitutional Amendments of 1980 further clarified and refined the devolution of power to the community and regional levels. The Communities, the term "Cultural" having been eliminated in 1980, were granted more rights to pass decrees. The institutions of the Flemish Community and Region were combined into one. Thus, they use only one set of institutions: the Flemish Council and the Flemish Executive. The French Community and the Walloon region remained separate with their own institutions: the Council of the French Community and the Executive of the French Community, the Walloon Regional Council and the Walloon Regional Executive. With regard to Brussels, it was stipulated that the Flemish Community would oversee the capital's monolingual Netherlandic institutions whereas the French Community would look after its monolingual French institutions. The national government would be responsible for the capital's bilingual institutions, as well as for language legislation concerning the six *communes á facilite*. Hence, the linguistic rights, granted to these boroughs by the language laws of 1963 cannot be modified by decrees of the Flemish Community Council. Furthermore, the national government remained responsible for linguistic legislation affecting the constitutionally recognized linguistic minorities contiguous to the east-west language border, as well as for the country's German-speaking area.

Conclusion

When examining the language planning activities undertaken by Belgium's government, it becomes evident that the goals of the linguistic legislation have changed over the years. As such, this legislation reflects the evolution and the complex interplay of the social, cultural, political, and economic characteristics specific to this nation-state.

Initially the language legislation stemmed from the demands of the Flemish militants seeking to defend and promote their language in the northern provinces. Their linguistic demands neither aimed to make Flanders monolingual in Netherlandic nor to impose Netherlandic in Wallonia. As such, the Flamingants' demands did not initially question, nor jeopardize, the linguistic rights of the nation's Francophones.

Once the right to use Netherlandic in Flanders had been granted, the government was pressured into instituting territorial monolingualism in Flanders and Wallonia while protecting the bilingual status of Brussels. This legislation did not merely jeopardize the linguistic rights of the Francophones residing within the northern provinces but eventually led to the eradication of these privileges.

During the third wave of language planning activities, language legislation became embodied in the nation's Constitution. Due to the growing strength of the Flemish and Walloon movements, the state was restructured and the French and Netherlandic ethnolinguistic communities were granted a measure of power over language planning activities. Language

planning in Belgium is now characterized by a situation in which there is neither complete delegation of power to the various linguistic groups nor total centralization of legislative powers. It should be pointed out that throughout the second and third waves of language planning activities, Brussels has remained a bone of contention that has yet to be resolved to the satisfaction of the Flemish, Walloons, and Bruxellois.

In summary, Belgium is now constitutionally divided into four linguistic territories, three linguistic and cultural communities, and three economic regions. Presently, territorial monolingualism has made it possible for Netherlandic to be used in all of the domains in Flanders that had once been monopolized by French Although French-Netherlandic bilingualism remain significantly more common among the inhabitants of the northern provinces as compared to their southern counterparts, the Flemish now have the option of choosing whether or not they will learn Belgium's "other language."

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[1]This paper was written for a class on language planning taught by Dr. Nancy Hornberger.

[2]Activities associated with corpus planning for French, Netherlandic, or German will not be addressed. It should be noted that speakers of these three languages look to France, Holland and Germany respectively for the linguistic norm to be adopted. Hence, corpus planning activities in Belgium have been limited.

Appendix I:
Legislation affecting language use

1831: Voting of the Constitution. Article 23: "The use of language shall be optional. The matter may be regulated only by law and only for acts of public authority and judicial proceedings."

1831: Decree stipulating that only the French version of laws has official recognition. The Netherlandic or German translations have no legal value.

1864: Royal decree stating that the standardized version of Dutch Netherlandic is to be adopted as the linguistic norm in Flanders.

1873: Netherlandic can be used in the lower courts of Flanders.

1878: Netherlandic can be used in public administration of Flanders.

1884: Postage stamps become bilingual.

1886: Founding of the Royal Flemish Academy of Languages and Literature in Ghent.

1886: Netherlandic can be used in the Belgium Parliament.

1888: The first Netherlandic speech is made in the Belgian Chamber.

1893: Constitutional Amendment which establishes a general, multiple franchise. Every male citizen of 25 is granted at least one vote. Depending upon property owned and professional qualifications, each voter can have up to 3 votes.

1898: The Equality Act: French and Netherlandic texts of law and royal decrees are granted equal legal validity.

1918: King Albert's speech in which he assures the Flemish population that both national languages would be treated equally, and that the issue of a Netherlandic-speaking university would be addressed.

1919: The treaty of Versailles grants Belgium the German-speaking areas to the east of Liège.

1921: Constitutional Amendment: universal equal male sufferage is instituted. Proportional representation and compulsory voting are maintained.

1921: Language laws stating that all business conducted between Ministers and provincial authorities has to take place in the language of the region.
The military forces are divided into two sections: one French section and one Netherlandic section.

1928: Voting of a bill concerning the language used in the army. French-speaking and Netherlandic-speaking recruits are placed in different units. The recruits receive their training in the language that they commonly use.

1929: A general amnesty is proclaimed for activists.

1931: A member of parliament makes the first proposal concerning a constitutional amendment which would make the unitary state into a federal state.

1932: Language laws are passed stipulating:
- -the creation of two monolingual regions: Flanders and Wallonia; and one bilingual region: Brussels;
- -that public administration, army, and law courts would use only Netherlandic in Flanders and only French in Wallonia;
- -that the administration of the nation's capital was to be bilingual;
- -that each government ministry would include French and Flemish sections;
- -the official recognition of the language frontier;
- -that census findings would be used in determining the language to be used in administration.

No penalties are stipulated for infringement of these laws.

1935: Flemish courts of law would use Netherlandic. The law stipulates that court proceedings using French in Flanders would not be considered valid.

1938: Royal decree creates two advisory cultural councils (Flemish and French).

1938: Law stressing monolingualism in the army.

1947: Last census including questions concerning languages spoken. Results released in 1954.

1959: The government puts into effect its economic recovery program.

1960: Radio and television services are separated into two autonomous sections: BRT (Netherlandic) and RTB (French).

1961: Law stipulating that no more questions concerning language use would be asked in census questionnaires.

1962: Law concerning the Belgium diplomatic corps. A special effort will be made to hire Netherlandic-speaking diplomats.

1962: Bill concerning the language border. Certain areas are transferred from Flanders to Wallonia, and other areas are transferred from Wallonia to Flanders.

1963: Language laws stipulating:
- -the creation of three monolingual regions: Flanders, Wallonia, and the German areas in which all public administration is to take place in the language of that region;
- -that Brussels remains bilingual;
- -that the six "*Communes périphériques*" (six *communes à facilité*) are granted a special administrative status. The boroughs' Francophone inhabitants are granted special linguistic rights in terms of French-speaking education and administration;
- -that the language border would no longer change because of census findings.

1967: The constitution is officially translated into Netherlandic.

1971: Constitutional amendments specify that:
- -the four linguistic territories are constitutionally recognized;
- -Belgium be divided into three economic regions: Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels.
- -Belgium be divided into three cultural communities: French, Netherlandic, and German.

-Cultural autonomy is granted to the French community, the Netherlandic community, and the German community.
-henceforth the cabinet has to have the same number of French-speaking and Netherlandic-speaking ministers.

1971: The special administrative status of the six *communes à facilité* is revoked. However, the special linguistic rights granted to their French-speaking populations are maintained.

1973: Decree of the Flemish Cultural Council stipulating that all business in Flanders should be conducted in Netherlandic.

1977: Each of the three regions (Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels) is granted considerable economic autonomy. Each region is granted its own assembly.

1980: Constitutional amendments which give more power to each of the three communities.

Appendix II:
Language laws and education

1835: Louvain University is officially opened as a monolingual French institute of higher education.

1842: Primary schools in Flanders are allowed to teach in Netherlandic.

1850: Flemish secondary school system has to teach Netherlandic as the second language.

1883: Netherlandic becomes the sole language of instruction during the first two years of secondary schooling in Flanders. Instruction in French has to be provided for those students desirous of continuing their education at the university level. Instruction in French has to be provided for students who did not speak Netherlandic.

1890: Louvain University introduces its first Netherlandic courses.

1910: Law stipulating that private Catholic schools in Flanders have to use Netherlandic when teaching certain subjects in the secondary schools.

1914: Schooling becomes compulsory.

1916-1918: The Germans open Ghent University as a monolingual Netherlandic institute, known as "von Bissing's University."

1921: All *athenees* (secondary schools) in Flanders have to provide a Netherlandic section.

1921: Education at both the primary and the secondary levels are to be conducted in the language of the region. Brussels has to ensure that Netherlandic-speaking schools are available for Netherlandic-speaking students.

1923: The University of Ghent becomes bilingual.

1926: Netherlandic becomes the obligatory language of instruction in the Flemish lower secondary school level.

1930: University of Ghent becomes a monolingual Netherlandic institute of higher education.

1932: Education laws are passed stipulating that:
- -primary education has to be given in the language of the region;
- -the regional language become the vehicular language of secondary schools;
- -transmutation classes are permitted;
- -children in Brussels would be taught in their mother tongue;
- -the first modern language of all schools is to be the language of the other region;
- -Walloon sections of secondary schools are allowed to continue;
- -The French-speaking minority in Flanders keep their linguistic rights.

1963: The Ministry of Education is separated into a French ministry and a Netherlandic ministry.

1963: Language Laws are passed stipulating that:
- -regional monolingualism is mandatory for both state and private schools;
- -transmutation classes are eradicated;
- -children residing in Brussels would be educated in their mother tongue.

1966: The French and Netherlandic sections of Louvain University become autonomous.

1968: The linguistic disputes concerning the University of Louvain lead to the fall of Vanden Boeynants' government. It is decided that the French section of the university would move to a new campus in the French section of the province.

1968: European Court of Human Rights decides that the Belgian government has the right to impose monolingualism in education.

1969: The Free University of Brussels splits into two separate monolingual universities: the U.L.B. (French), and the V.U.B. (Netherlandic).

1971: Parents living in Brussels can choose their children's language of education.

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